

15th October, 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

Parental update 74

Seasoned readers of these *Updates* will doubtless recall that we originally started publishing them, every Friday, as a way of keeping in touch during the pandemic. Last Friday was the first Friday we haven't published a parental *Update* for well over a year – as we're now on a fortnightly publication cycle. It feels, therefore, somewhat ironic that this Friday we have some important news to share about Covid arrangements from Monday 18th October.

Before that, though, I'd like to point you in the direction of a letter that Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi and Health Secretary Sajid Javid have written to all parents of secondary school students: you can find it [here](#).

Important announcement for all Year 9 and Year 11 parents: Covid measures

We have seen a small spike in infection rates in Years 9 and 11. As a result, we have been contacted by representatives of the City Council to ask us to put in place extra measures in these year-groups. As a result, I need to advise you that:

- **all students in Years 9 and 11 must now wear face-masks in communal areas around school;**
- all Year 9 and 11 families are encouraged to keep up their Lateral Flow Testing (if you need additional kits, they are available from school or from pharmacists); and
- all students in Years 9 and 11 will be reminded about the need for frequent hand sanitisation (this happened in Assembly this morning).

A number of other measures, such as separate break-times and Assemblies, are already in place here. The measures will be in place for a full week (*ie* the week beginning Monday 18th October), after which they will be reviewed.

Please could I ask you to reinforce these messages with your son(s) over the weekend? – and to ensure they have a face-mask on Monday? Thank you very much!

As I'm sure you're aware by now, there are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of catching the virus:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds;
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
- wash your hands as soon as you get home;
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze; and
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

Covid vaccinations

I appreciate that a number of 12- to 15-year-old students who wished to be vaccinated when the NHS team were in school last Thursday, were not able to 'get jabbed' on the day (for a variety of reasons). I'm pleased to report that we'll be hosting the team again, probably on the Thursday of half-term, between 11am and 4pm. Vaccination will be by appointment, and we'll write out under separate cover next week with details about how appointments can be made.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ('SEND')

In the absence of Mrs Kavanagh, our SENDCo, vice-Principal Mrs Penketh will be overseeing our SEND provision, and will be increasing her hours (so that she is working full-time) to enable her to do so. I'm very grateful to Mrs Penketh for being so willing to take on this extra responsibility at such a busy time.

If you would like to contact Mrs Penketh to discuss any aspect of our SEND work, please don't hesitate to e-mail her at [this address](#).

Dr Silverstone writes...

"I would like to draw your attention to 'The Big Ask', a report released last month by the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza. The aim of the report is capture the voices of as many children in England as possible, to amplify them, and to deliver improved life chances for this generation and beyond.

"As well as recording and analysing the voices of children, the report is a call to action for the adults who look after them. Dame de Souza writes that 'If children want to make a better world, it will take a collective shift in adult attitudes to give young people the means to make it happen.' "

"The report is full of statistics, the voices of the younger generation and suggestions for changes that may make positive life changes for the next generation. It is well worth a look; you can find it [here](#)."

Best wishes...

...to our Year 11 students, who will begin their Mocks immediately after half-term. Do please hold the whole year-group in your thoughts and prayers for the 9 school days starting on Monday 1st November – I am sure they would appreciate your support.

Finally...

We'll be in touch again just after half-term (Friday 5th November). Do enjoy a restful weekend and, when we get there, a happy half-term break!

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley
Principal.